



the PRProfessional



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From the President

Wow! It is hard to believe that my first year as president is coming to a close. As I review the past year, I am proud of the opportunities we have provided for our members, programs we produced, and recognitions we gave to our honorees and scholarship winners.

I want to thank everyone who served on the board of directors who made my year a success with their generous sharing of their time, talent, and resources on behalf of PRPLI. Their cooperation and teamwork have been important factors to the success we've achieved.

I would be remiss if I didn't thank Louise Cassano for her dedication and support to me personally and for her 25-plus years of dedication to PRPLI. She has decided to step down from the board and will retire as our newsletter editor (this is her last issue). Louise has been a sounding board, the institutional memory, and good friend to me. I will miss her at our monthly meetings. The big question is how do we fill her shoes?

At our recent annual membership meeting in June, we voted in a new slate of officers and board members. I look forward to working with all of them for the next year.

I am excited to report that we are planning our summer networking event, so keep a lookout for the date in an upcoming Newsbites. Also, please mark your calendar for our first program of the fall, Psychology of Social Media, on October 24, 2018.

Without members PRPLI would not exist. Now is the time to renew your membership! The new membership year starts on July 1. Don't wait to renew – Long Island Ducks tickets may be in your future.

I also want to encourage all our members to become involved in PRPLI. We need your talent and resources on our committees and in our newsletter. If you are interested in finding out more about how you can help, just reach out to me at info@PRPLI.org

Enjoy the summer and I look forward to another great year in PRPLI!

Best regards,

Donna Rivera-Downey
President

Who We Are

Our Board consists of the following members:

Executive Board:

President:

Donna Rivera-Downey

Executive Vice-President:

Rachael Risinger

First Vice-President:

Edith Reinhardt

Secretary:

Lisa Chalker

Treasurer:

Jerry Allocca

Board of Directors:

Anna D'Aloisio

Heather Edwards

Tim Hurley

Cassandra Rowan

Christine Sammarco

Charmise Woodside-Desiré

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For more information about PRPLI, please visit our website at PRPLI.org or email us at info@prpli.org 

From The Editor



It's with a lot of emotion and sentiment that I conclude my tenure on the PRPLI board of directors after more than 25 years and retire as editor of this newsletter. I knew all of the founding members of PRPLI and served with some of them. I'm not certain exactly when I started as editor, but I know it goes back to at least 2010.

I've held every office on the board (some twice) and enjoyed them all, albeit some more than others. I've served at one time or another on just about every committee, have had so much fun, and have learned so much from a host of talented people. I'm the proud recipient of two prestigious awards from this organization; the Mentor Award in 2008 (now known as the Howard Blankman Mentor Award) and, most recently, the Jack Rettaliata Lifetime Achievement Award.

The roster of individuals I've met, those with whom I've worked as a volunteer, those with whom I've served on the board, and those whose articles I've edited over the years overwhelms my memory.

I've decided, in this issue, to recall some of those memories with photos from the past. Some of the people pictured are still active members. Others have moved away, changed careers, or visit us only once or twice a year. This is only a smattering of the people who have had a presence with this organization.

In my search for a photo of Jack Rettaliata, I was surprised to find that there were none in the PRPLI archives that were accessible to me. So, at the suggestion of Bert Cunningham, I contacted Diane Baumert-Moyik, a former president of PRPLI, who is senior manager of external affairs for Aerospace Systems at Northrop Grumman Corporation. Diane works out of the Florida offices of Northrop. She put her historians (all volunteers) on it and a new volunteer Pamela Griffin-Hansen came through with a beautiful 8x10 of Jack (aka John) Rettaliata. This is just an example of the relationships that are developed in this organization and how they assist and last beyond organization meetings and monthly program attendance.

These photos are great memories and we continue to build more memories as the years go by as evidenced by photos of our recent awards dinner and annual meeting. My plan is to continue to have a presence at PRPLI meetings, and I encourage you, whatever your commitment is, to keep it going and to take advantage of all PRPLI offers. The cumulative knowledge of all its members will make you a better person and better in your chosen career.

Enjoy the read and enjoy the memories,

Louise Cassano



Memories



See Page 5 for the Identities of people pictured here.

Observations



Wrack' 'Em Up

By William Krol

I missed the deadline for turning in my column for the newsletter, stymied that I could not think of a topic I had not tackled previously. As I drafted a placating email to

Louise, I wanted to explain that I had “racked” my brain trying to come up with a subject ... wait, or was it “wracked”? (It was suddenly vitally important that I spell the word correctly, especially as I was about to throw myself upon her editorial mercy.)

To the dictionary! I shouted. Well, at least in my head. Well, maybe not so much those words. OK, it really amounted to “Let’s type in ‘wracked my brains’ into Google and see what comes back.” Imagine my surprise when I discovered that Merriam-Webster had a whole usage note on “Rack vs. Wrack.” (<https://www.merriam-webster.com/words-at-play/rack-vs-wrack>). Suddenly, I had a topic to write about.

So which is correct? Apparently, both.

The words have different sources, but Webster recommends treating them as variants of the same word, at least where the verb forms are concerned. Both “wrack” and “rack” have similar meanings. When you wrack something, you destroy it. When you rack something, you’re torturing it or causing distress. Either way, it’s unpleasant.

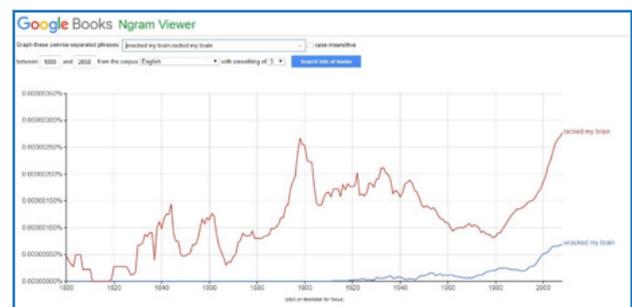
When used as nouns, “rack” and “wrack” have different meanings. A “rack” is something you hang your clothes on or something you use to torture another individual. A “wrack” is usually associated with things marine or nautical. Wrack is also a type of marine vegetation.

So when you are trying to describe how you thought and thought and thought before coming up with an idea, you either “wracked your brain” or “racked your brain.” Pick one and stick with it.

Which leads us to a larger question. When there are two variants of a spelling, which should you choose? A tool I’ve found useful is Google Ngram Viewer. N-grams are sequences of n words that are next to each other. One word is a unigram, two words a bigram, three words a trigram, and so on. (There are far more detailed and technical explanations to be found online.)

In the editing group I belong to on Facebook, many of the members have used Google Ngram Viewer to determine which word or phrase is more popular. I never paid much attention before, but when I was copy editing a manuscript recently, I was often faced with a choice of spellings for particular words or usages particular to the subject matter. These weren’t just British vs. American spellings, but often the way the author had used a phrase or styled something.

I decided to use Google Ngram Viewer to determine the popularity of each variant. In the Viewer, you indicate your choice of word spelling or phrase, and then set a time frame. The magical wizardry of Google reviews books within that time frame and returns a graph that indicates instances of the word or phrase.



In the graphic above, I asked Google Ngram Viewer to determine the popularity of “wracked my brain” vs. “racked my brain,” within the years 1800 to 2008 (that’s as recent as Google lets you search).

As you can see, “racked my brain” is found much more frequently than “wracked my brain.” It appears this has always been so, but starting around 1980, it began to far outstrip the use of “wracked my brain.”

[Continued Online: Click Here](#)

From The Reporter's Side:



Emily Ngo,
National Politics Reporter

Interview By Krista Giannak

Emily Ngo covers national politics at *Newsday*. As a White House Washington bureau reporter, Ngo covered President Donald Trump's first year in office, and

she previously followed both Trump and former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton on their 2016 presidential campaign trails. Other career highlights also include political analysis on NPR, MSNBC, and NY1, as well as working on the staffs of the *New York Post* and *amNewYork*. Contact her at emily.ngo@newsday.com.

On The Campaign Trail

After having covered congressional and gubernatorial campaigns, Ngo worked the fast-paced and action-packed 2013 New York City elections featuring Anthony Weiner in the mayoral race and Eliot Spitzer in the comptroller race. The campaign trail needs "fast" and "clean" writers who can turn around quick copy after long hours, Ngo said. "A good ear for identifying news in otherwise-routine stump speeches is also quite necessary."

When Trump Won the Election

Ngo had been following both Hillary Clinton's and Donald Trump's campaigns, and she was assigned to Clinton's Manhattan election night party. She described the feel of that eventful night: "I remember vividly that the mood among Clinton supporters at the Javits Center turned very dramatically from euphoria to gloom as the results were announced, swing state by swing state. We reinterviewed people as the night wore on. Clinton didn't turn up that night to her election event to address supporters; John Podesta came in her stead. Those Clinton backers who remained at the venue into the early morning were in a state of shock. Many left in tears."

In the following weeks, Ngo covered Trump's transition from Trump Tower on Fifth Avenue, and she then followed him to the White House to cover his presidency.

Covering All Angles

When asked about avoiding political bias, Ngo explained: "I try to add context to an issue and then represent and quote from as many angles as possible, knowing there can be more than two sides."

Ngo also commented on the politically polarized environment, saying: "Understandably, someone out there will find something biased against their viewpoint in any story."



To anyone considering political analysis as a career, Ngo advised: "Take in as many viewpoints on as many topics as you can. Read everything you can, from every angle. Talk with politicians, aides, and consultants of every stripe. Tell the stories that are below the surface and

[Continued Online: Click Here](#)

Memories

Names from the Memories Collage on Page 3

- A. Kathy Coley
- B. George Jarvis and Maria Cinque
- C. Jennifer Cline and Laurel Factor
- D. Installation 2005
- E. Patrick Calabria and Bert Cunningham
- F. WABC Field Trip 2001
- G. Howard Blankman and Steve Koenigsberg
- H. Katherine Heaviside and Valerie Zurblis
- I. Don Miller
- J. Jack Rettaliata
- K. Laurie Bloom
- L. Summer Mixer 2007 at Rosewood
- M. Maria Cinque, Joe Gergela, Frank Brinka, Jennifer Cline, Hank Boerner, Steve Koenigsberg
- N. Steve Brady, Flo Federman, Elaine DeLuca-Byrnes
- O. Hilary Hartung and Mitch Shapiro
- P. Jay Rettaliata (Jack's son)
- Q. Robert Lipper, Christine Sheahan
- R. 2006 Mixer at The Bayou with Chuck Weinstein and Robin Bernstein (seated), Roberta Kuehl, Bill Moseley, Mike Kornfeld

He Said, She Said



She Said...

The Princess and the Pea ... and Other Fairy Tales

On May 19, 2018, the royal wedding of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle captured our hearts and attention. In the midst of our troubled world, even an inkling of a real-life fairy tale warmed our hearts.

Many of us grew up reading fairy tales such as the *Princess and the Pea*. That was about a young woman whose royal identity is established by a test of her sensitivity to a pea placed under her bed. Written by Hans Christian Andersen, the story, which most likely originated from Sweden, first appeared as an inexpensive booklet on May 8, 1835, in Copenhagen. Andersen had first heard the folklore as a child.

In 2005, British children's author Lauren Child published her remake of the tale. If reading bedtime stories to your children is part of your routine, you may be familiar with Child. She is also known for the *Clarice Bean* series.

You can actually tell someone's age based on their answer to the question: "What was your favorite picture book?" It might be the *Giving Tree* or *Where The Wild Things Are*, but it's probably not *Don't Let The Pigeon Drive the Bus!* Mo Willems originally published that humorous pigeon story in 2003.

When was the last time you read a picture book?

To yourself.

I'm not suggesting you do this to revert to childhood simplicity. I'm suggesting you do this to become a better writer.

As public relations professionals, people count on us to write well. Writing for children is not easy, and it encompasses many of the rules of solid writing. You must tell a story from beginning to end with a character arc, sensory words, minimal adjectives and adverbs, strong nouns and verbs, and a theme, and you must do this ideally in fewer than 500 words. You must say enough to give visual cues to an illustrator and yet not over explain. You must create a reason for your reader to turn the page,



to get to the next scene. Many similarities exist between the art of writing picture books for kids and the art of screenwriting.

Still you may be asking yourself, how is this going to help me with my writing. Hmmmm. Your press releases and your pitches will be short and to the point. Your ad copy and your web copy will be strong in its messaging. Your speeches will become more compelling. Your thinking will become clear.

This summer when you have some leisure time, mosey on over to the picture book section of your library and read a few of the current ones, as well as the classics. Then pick up a copy of Strunk and White's *Elements of Style*. It will remind you to "never use a long word when a short word will do."

Our job is to keep the attention of our publics in a fast-paced, lack-of-attention, and text-addicted world. We can't make up fairy tales, but we can sure spin a tale like Rumpelstiltskin.

Debra Scala Giokas is the marketing director at Certilman Balin. When not writing about and for lawyers, she's writing for kids. Follow her on Twitter @debrascalag.

He Said...

I've Been Short All My Life

"Writing is easy. All you do is stare at a blank sheet of paper until drops of blood form on your forehead." – Journalist and author Gene Fowler

"I didn't have time to write a short letter, so I wrote a long one instead." – Mark Twain

The above quotes ring true to only those of us who have 1) stared as if in a trance at a blank piece of paper or computer screen thinking of fanciful ways to start a paragraph and 2) wanted to explain something simply, briefly, and beautifully.

As a longtime pencil press journalist, I've been asked to "write short" so many times I struggle to "write long." There's a place for long-form narrative but only if that narrative can't be related in 350 words. Figuring out whether that's so is why wordsmiths and editors walk around mumbling to themselves.

[Continued Online: Click Here](#)

Awards Dinner

At its annual awards dinner held at Westbury Manor on May 9, PRPLI honored the rising stars, praised those who mentor others, and commended the practitioners who have devoted their careers to PR. PRPLI also recognized outstanding PR campaigns, exceptional media coverage of our area, and honored those leaders who have promoted Long Island. Chairs **Cassie Rowan** and **Rachael Risinger** did an excellent job of planning the event. Honorees and guests enjoyed a delightful evening beginning with an outdoor cocktail hour followed by dinner and networking indoors at Westbury Manor in Jericho. Tina Atlas-Panos delivered on beautiful invitations and program journal, and two college students, Pakeology Cheam and Amanda Benizzi, were presented with PRPLI scholarship awards of \$1,000 each.

Honorees included **Louise Cassano**, Jack Rettaliata Lifetime Achievement Award; **Discover Long Island**, Long Island Achievement Award; **Scott Brinton** of Herald Community Newspapers, Outstanding Media Award; **Flo Federman** of Marcum LLP, Howard M. Blankman Outstanding Mentor Award; **Ashley Fresa** of WordHampton PR, Rising Star Award; **Lessing's Hospitality Group**, PR Campaign of the Year Award (In-house); and **Zimmerman/Edelson**, PR Campaign of the Year Awards (Agency) for Art in the Gardens at Old Westbury Gardens: Seward Johnson.



Scholarship winners Amanda Benizzi and Pakeology Cheam flank Scholarship Committee Chair Lisa Chalker



Award winners included: standing (l-r): Michelle Sanchez (Lessing's Hospitality Group), Nicholas Renna (Lessing's Hospitality Group), Scott Brinton (Herald Community Newspapers), David Chauvin and Jack Mendlinger (Zimmerman/Edelson, Inc.), Donna Rivera-Downey (president of Public Relations Professionals of Long Island, Girl Scouts of Nassau County) Seated (l-r): Paige Beallias (Lessing's Hospitality Group), Jamie Claudio (Discover LI), Flo Federman (Marcum LLP), Louise Cassano (LuCas Communications), Jadis Armbruster (Zimmerman/Edelson, Inc.), Ashley Fresa (WordHampton Public Relations)



It's become tradition that all of the past presidents of PRPLI who attend the Awards Dinner pose for a photo. This year's attendees included (l-r) Bert Cunningham, Mike Kornfeld, Kali Chan, Patricia Gambale, Jeff Morosoff, Flo Federman, Laurie Bloom, Kimberly Alarcon Elardo, Lee Peretz and Louise Cassano with current President Donna Rivera-Downey (second from right).



ANNUAL MEETING

At the annual meeting of PRPLI held on June 19, new members of the PRPLI board of directors were introduced and sworn into office. Board members pledge to uphold the responsibilities of their office to support PRPLI's charter and bylaws by attending meetings and taking an active role in the activities of the organization and to uphold the integrity of the public relations profession through business and personal activities and encourage the ongoing education of practitioners and advancement of the public relations profession.



Pictured are the new officers and directors.

Seated (l-r): Rachael Risinger, executive vice-president; Donna Rivera-Downey, president for a second term; Edith Reinhardt, first vice president; and Lisa Chalker, secretary. Standing (l-r) are Directors Heather Edwards, Christine Sammarco, Tim Hurley, and Cassandra Rowan, Missing from the photo are Treasurer Jerry Allocca, and Directors Anna D'Aloisio, and Charmise Woodside-Desiré.

Shout It Out

Debra Scala-Giokas has reported that her “doll that does good” was featured in the “Kindness Project” of the June 2018 issue of Woman’s Day Magazine. If you haven’t seen the dolls, visit Debra’s Etsy Shop at <https://www.etsy.com/shop/DebraAnnDolls> or check out the collection on her Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/debraanndolls/> or Instagram at <https://www.instagram.com/debraanndolls65/>

The dolls are now available for sale at North Fork Craft Gallery at the Shoppes at East Wind in Wading River. The store sells handmade goods from 100 local artisans.

Send Us Your Ideas

PRPLI’s Program Committee is interested in hearing from you. Is there a program you’d like to have the committee organize? Please send us your ideas on topics you’d like to learn more about, speakers you’d like to hear, and any other thoughts you have about our educational programs. This is your organization. We want to hear your voice.



Connect With PRPLI

Stay in the loop with PRPLI’s digital network.

For up-to-date information on programs, the membership directory, access to the PRPLI newsletter and other forms, please visit us at PRPLI.org. You can also follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter @PRPLITweets](#) and on [LinkedIn](#).

MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN SOMEONE’S LIFE AND CAREER.

Encourage a colleague, student or business associate to become a member of PRPLI.

Membership has its rewards:

- Discounts to educational programs
- Free mixers
- Discount to the annual PRPLI awards gala
- Annual member meeting, board elections and dinner
- Weekly e-news update
- Quarterly e-newsletter: The PProfessional
- Access to our members-only job bank
- Active engagement with fellow members on our LinkedIn group, Facebook page and Twitter account

Fees for membership:

- New individual memberships: \$125
- Individual renewal: \$100
- New corporate memberships (includes up to three members): \$300
- Renewing corporate memberships (includes up to three members): \$250
- Each additional member for a corporate membership: \$75
- Student membership: \$25

An application form can be downloaded at <http://prpli.org/membership/join-prpli/>.